

as blue ribbon schools. I believe that they all serve as models for other schools and communities seeking to provide young students with a nurturing environment that will enable each child to develop into a life-long learner.●

#### TRIBUTE TO CAPT. CARLTON A. SIMMONS, JR., USN (RET.)

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today with the sad mission of reporting the loss of a truly outstanding naval officer, Capt. Carlton A. Simmons, Jr. He passed away on July 14 after a long illness and was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on July 22.

A native of North Dighton, MA, and a 1974 graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Captain Simmons was commissioned an ensign in 1975. Following designation as a naval aviator in 1977 and qualification in the A-7E Corsair, he served with Attack Squadron 22, completing two deployments to the western Pacific.

Followon tours of duty included an exchange assignment with the Air Force, flying F-16 Falcons with the 421st Tactical Fighter Squadron; and duty as flag secretary to the commander, Middle East Force in Manama, Bahrain. Later, after training in the F/A-18 Hornet, he served with Strike Fighter Squadron 113.

A superb leader, the Navy entrusted Captain Simmons with three command assignments—the Strike Fighter Weapons School, Pacific Fleet; Strike Fighter Squadron 25; and the F/A-18 Fleet Readiness Squadron, Strike Fighter Squadron 125. While commanding officer of VFA-125, the squadron earned the Chief of Naval Operations Aviation Safety Award for surpassing 70,000 accident-free flight hours; and Personal Excellence Partnership Program awards from the Chief of Naval Operations and the State of California.

Captain Simmons also served a 22-month tenure in Washington as the Strike Warfare and Naval Aviation Programs Congressional liaison officer in the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs. In this capacity, Captain Simmons provided members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the professional and personal staffs, and many of you, with timely support regarding Navy plans and programs. His contributions enabled Congress and the Navy to work closely in ensuring the Nation possessed a modern and capable naval force.

During his illustrious career, Captain Simmons was the recipient of many awards and commendations including the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, and the Navy Commendation Medal with Gold Star.

Mr. President, Captain Simmons, his wife Carol, and their daughters Erin and Stacey, made many sacrifices during his long career. It is indeed tragic that he has been taken from his family, the Navy, and the Nation he so self-

lessly served. His courage and fortitude marked him as a great patriot. He will be sorely missed.●

#### TRIBUTE TO TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT'S WE THE PEOPLE TEAM

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to extend my sincere congratulations to the students of Trumbull High School, who recently won an award at the "We the People \* \* \* The Citizen and the Constitution" national finals in Washington, DC.

The "We the People \* \* \*" program includes a comprehensive curriculum on the history and principles of American constitutional democracy. It culminates in a competition testing student teams' knowledge of the Constitution, structured as a congressional hearing with students testifying as constitutional experts. This innovative approach has received critical acclaim from educators and scholars alike, and the curriculum stands as a model for future educational programs. Students involved in the "We the People \* \* \*" program not only gain an understanding of constitutional history, but many of them also show a much stronger commitment to democratic principles and feel more involved in the political process.

The students from Trumbull High School were recognized for their expertise on Unit 6 "Role of Citizen" of the "We the People \* \* \*" curriculum. I'm very proud of their accomplishment, and would like to recognize them all by name: Katherine Baker, Scott Baker, Heather Beardsley, Annette Besso, Andrew Braverman, Meredith Bryk, Christopher Cheng, Jonathan Chin, Jessica Cohen, Vimala George, Kristy Gordon, Travis Halky, Stephen Henshaw, Ryan Leichsenring, Jennifer Liu, Devon Nykaza, Nicole Perreault, Diane Perry, Anne Rackliffe, Sophia Rountos, Rachel Simonds, and Alan Stern.

In February 1963, President John F. Kennedy said that "the future promise of any nation can be directly measured by the present prospect of its youth." Frighteningly low voter turnout has recently raised concerns about public frustration with our political system. And yet, when I had the opportunity to meet with these Trumbull high schoolers, I was struck by the students' optimism and thoughtfulness about our great constitutional democracy. Their strong sense of civic responsibility provides me with great hope for our future.●

#### TRIBUTE TO PVT. WALTER C. WETZEL

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to join the Radio Control Club of Detroit in paying tribute to Pvt. Walter C. Wetzel of the U.S. Army 13th Infantry Brigade, 8th Infantry Division. On April 3, 1945, Private Wetzel, a young squad leader with the antitank

company of the 13th Infantry, was keeping watch at his platoon's command post in Birken, Germany. Early in the morning, Private Wetzel detected enemy forces moving in to attack the post. Immediately, he alerted the command post occupants and began fighting against heavy automatic weapons fire. Under cover of darkness, Germans forces moved close to the building and began throwing grenades. During the fighting, two grenades landed in the room from which Private Wetzel and the others were defending the post. With a warning to his fellow soldiers, Private Wetzel threw himself on the grenades just before they exploded.

Sadly, the heroic deed of Private Wetzel cost him his life, but in so doing he saved the lives of others in his division. His comrades were able to continue the defense of the command post while breaking the power of a dangerous German war front. Certainly, his sacrifice was in keeping with the U.S. Army's highest traditions of bravery and heroism. Private Wetzel was laid to rest at the American Battlefield Monuments Commission cemetery in the Netherlands. Shortly after his death, Private Wetzel was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In further recognition, the Radio Control Club of Detroit has constructed a monument to Private Wetzel on the grounds of Wetzel State Park in Lenox Township of Northern Macomb County. The monument consists of a concrete monolith flagpole base with a bronze plaque inlaid and inscribed. Upon dedication, the field at which the monument will be placed will be named "Wetzel Memorial Flying Field." I ask the Senate to join this organization in remembering one of the many true American patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DAVID L. CINI

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, any town in America can find somebody to run their local government. But few cities ever have a leader whose courage, hope, and humor serve to inspire others to expect more from themselves and their community. East Lyme was fortunate enough to know one of these leaders—David L. Cini. Mr. Cini served as East Lyme's first selectman since 1989, and, sadly, he died earlier this month at the age of 60.

Eight years ago, I attended a political rally for David Cini that was held in a vacant lot behind a beauty salon in the small town of Niantic, CT, which is part of East Lyme. Also in attendance at this rally were Senator JOE LIEBERMAN, Congressman SAM GEJDENSON, and a host of other local dignitaries. Upon realizing that there were two U.S. Senators, a Congressman, and many other elected officials in attendance at this rally, I asked aloud, "Why are all of these important people gathered behind a beauty salon